

## History of Mahaska County. Schools (Chapter II, pt. 2)

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is *daily labor*, even although the carrier should occasionally ride during a portion of the night, as the *night* part could be struck out as surplussage. The garnsihee will therefore be discharged, and judgment entered up against the plaintiff for costs.

WARD, for plaintiff, then moved in arrest of judgment, that he had just discovered a material error in the proceedings, to-wit: that the transcript of the original suit on which the garnishment is predicated is signed *Peter Justice*, which he contended was not a sufficient authentication; for although had it been signed *Peter Dilts, Esq.* or *Dilts, Justice of the Peace*, it might possibly be considered good, yet *Peter*, simply, is not sufficient, and the addition of the word *Justice* will not aid.

PER CURIAM. There is evidently a diminution of record: It is clear that from the signature of *Peter* simple, Diets cannot be intended: the word *Justice* being merely *descriptis persona*, relating to *Peter* does not even by implication refer to *Dilts*. Judgment will therefore be arrested, and a rule granted on the Justice to perfect the transcript.

NOTE. At the next term the transcript was amended by the addition thereto of the following certificate:

State of Iowa, Cedar County, ss.

I do hereby certify, that by mistake in the signing of the above certificate, *Dilts* was left out, between the *Peter* and the *Justice*.

(Signed:)

PETER DILTS,  
Justice of the Peace.

Judgment was thereupon reinstated, and the garnishment vacated.

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## HISTORY OF MAHASKA COUNTY.

BY CAPT. W. A. HUNTER, OF OSKALOOSA HERALD.

[Continued from page 48.]

### SCHOOLS.

It will be remembered that we closed up the last chapter in this history by speaking of the schools of the city of Oskaloosa. There is nothing else, perhaps, that so much interests

persons with families, who contemplate taking up their future residence in a city, town or country, as to know something of the intelligence and morality of that city, town or country; and the only tangible method such have of arriving at the truth in these matters, is by the number and character of the school houses, churches, christian associations, and kindred improvements the place contains.

That the reader, whether at home or abroad, may know something of the improvements in Oskaloosa, in regard to school houses, churches, christian associations and such like, we propose to speak of them in this connection. The city is the actual owner of two quite large and commodious school buildings, divided off into four rooms each. Each one of these rooms is capable of accommodating sixty or seventy scholars, making in the neighborhood of five hundred in all. Each one of these rooms now has a competent female teacher, who is doing a good work in the way of education. Aside from these we have a number of other schools. The high school—a branch of the public schools—has been held for three or four years past in the First Presbyterian Church, for the want of school house room. An arrangement has been effected by which this school will, by the first of May next, be transferred to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, to which building the School Board are now putting up an addition. The attendance at this school during the past winter, was from one hundred to one hundred and thirty pupils, under the tuition of two very competent male teachers. These constitute the public schools of the city, with the exception of a colored school continued through the winter months, and taught by a competent female teacher. The number in attendance in all of these schools during the past winter would approximate seven hundred scholars, taught by ten teachers.

This however, does not cover the entire school facilities of the city. Oskaloosa College, with its four or five Professors and over three hundred enrolled students, is an institution of which our people should feel proud. The college building is located at the west end of the city, and is truly a fine and

substantial structure. It is three stories high, built of brick, sufficiently capacious to accommodate from five hundred to one thousand students, is surrounded by a beautiful plat of ground, and is now in a flourishing and encouraging condition. A. F. Ross, is Professor of Ancient and Modern Languages, a gentleman of long experience, a ripe scholar, and a Christian gentleman. The two Carpenters—G. T. and W. J. have been with the institution since its inception, and are worthy of the places they occupy.

Messrs. Hull & Kemble have been conducting a very popular select school in City Hall for some time past. Mr. Hull has been connected with this school for a number of years, and is deservedly very popular. We are not able to state the exact number of scholars that have been in attendance at this school, but will venture to say from sixty to one hundred. For a few months past, this school has been held in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and as their time will expire sometime in the present month (April) we understand that Mr. Kemble contemplates putting up a building of his own. We are truly glad of this, as it will add another school building to those we already have.

The Friends, known as Quakers, have a yearly meeting house, on the north side of the city, one hundred feet long by fifty-two feet wide, two stories high. Although not built for school purposes, yet it is at present occupied for that purpose. The number of teachers or pupils connected with it we are not able to state; but from the large number of the Society in the neighborhood, we presume the school is large and ably taught.

This, we believe, is all of the schools and school buildings at present; but we are gratified in being able to say, that the people of the city voted a tax of ten mills on the dollar at their meeting in March last, which raised about ten thousand dollars per annum towards the erection of a large and commodious school building. The city, a year or two ago, secured a block—over an acre and a half—on the south side of the city, upon which it is expected a thirty thousand dollar



house will be erected within three years, capable of accommodating one thousand or more scholars. This is the way to do it. A town, city or country never can invest money more profitably than in the construction of commodious school houses. In a pecuniary sense, it is money better invested than in going into a banking business; as it is the largest kind of an advertisement for filling up town, city or country, and where the *people* are, there will be the wealth. This, however, is the very lowest stand-point from which we should attempt to look at the benefits of such an improvement. Ignorance is a curse to any place, and where schools are scarce ignorance *must*, of necessity, abound; and could we ascertain the cause of all the crime in the country, aside from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks, we would find it to exist in ignorance. We will hazard the assertion, that eight out of ten of all the convicts in our prisons, and of those who come to the gallows, are persons who are grossly ignorant—whose early training—intellectual—moral and religious—was sadly neglected. Is not this a fact? We think it cannot be successfully contradicted. This being true, is it not a most powerful argument for the erection of suitable school houses, the employment of good and competent teachers, and proper training of the youth? Does it not benefit the pockets of those who pay the taxes? It would be much easier, pecuniarily, to educate all the children, than to have one in four of them grow up dissipated and unworthy members of society. There is no doubt of this. Then is it not a good omen to see noble structures going up here and there over the country, having for their object the bettering of the intellectual, moral and religious condition of our children and youth? Every one is prepared to answer, yes!

#### CHURCHES.

*Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Oskaloosa, Iowa.*—This congregation was organized November 10, 1844, by Rev. B. B. Bonham. The organization at first consisted of twenty-two members, six of whom, namely: W. McMurry, Robert W. Long, Silas M. Martin, Thomas P. Chapman, M.

L. Smith and W. B. Street, were elected ruling elders. Articles of incorporation were drawn up, signed and recorded. In 1846, the congregation erected, on lots previously purchased for that purpose, a house of worship—the first in Mahaska County. From its organization to 1849, the congregation was supplied with word and ordinances by different ministers; among whom was, Revs. J. M. Cameron and Jolly. In 1850, the minister and members of the congregation, except three men, and a few females, removed to California. From this time to 1857, the congregation merely held its existence; a part of this time the pulpit was supplied by the Revs. J. M. Berry, W. Laurence, J. Mathers and B. A. Smith; during most of the time, however, the church was occupied by the Methodists, Old and New School Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists. In this year (1857), Rev. J. R. Lawrence, at the call of the congregation, became pastor, and continued as such until the fall of 1866, when the congregation became vacant, and remained so until October 1867, when Rev. G. S. Adams became pastor, who still occupies that position. This congregation has suffered severe depletion at different times; in 1850, a number moving to California; at a subsequent period a congregation in the country was formed from its members; and when the great war for the Union came, many of her noble sons—loyal to their country, as well as to their God—filed into ranks and marched away, some of them never more to return, but with the honored dead of our land, they lie sleeping in their soldier graves in the sunny South. The congregation is now in a most prosperous condition, having had several accessions during the winter and spring. The Sabbath School is alive with interest, teachers and scholars seem to be working with a will. The future looks bright and promising.

*First Presbyterian Church.*—This church was organized on the 21st day of February, 1845, by Rev. Salmon Cowles, and was named "The Presbyterian Church of Oskaloosa." Jas. Conner was the first elder elected, which election occurred at the time of the organization. The following persons were

the organizing members: Jas. Conner, Rachael Conner, Jane Thompson, Wm. Bovell, S. B. Shelledy, Elizabeth Shelledy, Sarah A. Shelledy.

The following are the ministers, with the dates at which they commenced and left off serving the church. Rev. Salmon Cowles, commenced his labors Feb. 21, 1845, and served as a missionary until 1850. Rev. D. S. McComb commenced in 1850, and served one year as stated supply. Rev. G. M. Swan was installed pastor in 1852, and remained until 1854. Rev. Irwin Carson commenced in 1855, and served until 1858 or '59. Rev. W. M. Stryker commenced 1860, and remained until in 1861. Rev. H. A. Barclay was a supply for 1861. Rev. Silas Johnson commenced January 1, 1862, was installed in May, 1865, and left in May, 1867. Rev. D. H. Mitchell, the present pastor commenced August 1, 1867, was installed in November of the same year, and is now the pastor.

The following persons have been and now are elders: Jas. Conner, ordained Feb. 21, 1845, Jas. H. Bovell, July 3, 1847, Jas. M. Sweeney, December 20, 1850, Jas. A. Young and W. H. H. Rice, 1854, Francis Thompson, installed October 17, 1858, A. M. Rodgers and R. S. Crozier, the same year, J. B. Ayres, July 10, 1864, Henry Howard and Jas. S. Johnson at the same time, and W. A. Hunter, July 8, 1866; of these, R. S. Crozier died January 25, 1863, and J. B. Ayres, August 17, 1865. Dismissed, Jas. Conner, Jas. H. Bovell, Jas. M. Sweeney and W. H. H. Rice.

Seven of the members have died, and sixty-three have been dismissed. Present membership about one hundred and fifty. Number of baptisms since 1861, thirty-one.

On the 19th day of January, 1848, measures were taken for the organization of a Sabbath School, which was affected soon thereafter, and has been in successful operation ever since, now numbering about one hundred and thirty scholars.

*Church of Christ (Disciples), in Oskaloosa, Iowa.*—On March 25, 1846, H. H. Hendrix, acting Evangelist, the persons whose names are appended were organized under the

following bond: "Church Register" containing the names of the members of the Church of God in Christ, in Oskaloosa, Iowa, taking the Bible alone as its only rule of faith and practice, and bearing the name Christian in honor of the Founder of our Holy Religion: Jos. B. <sup>v</sup>Royal, Louisa <sup>v</sup>Royal, C. G. <sup>v</sup>Owen, E. C. <sup>v</sup>Owen, Matthew <sup>v</sup>Edmundson, Margaret <sup>v</sup>Edmundson, Robert <sup>v</sup>McConnell, Nancy <sup>v</sup>McConnell, Eliza A. <sup>v</sup>McConnell, Robert <sup>v</sup>Gaston and Catharine <sup>v</sup>Gaston.

J. B. Royal was chosen Elder, and C. G. Owen and Matthew Edmundson, Deacons. At this time the church met for worship in the old court house, (now Mitch Wilson's store-room,) and sometimes in private families. The church, under the labors of H. H. <sup>v</sup>Hendrix and others, steadily increased in numbers and influence. This increase was greatly aided by the labors of the lamented Aaron <sup>v</sup>Chatterton, who located here in 1851, where he resided till 1858, when he removed to Fort <sup>v</sup>Madison to take charge of the "Evangelist," with which he afterwards removed to Davenport, where he died greatly beloved, a few years since. The chapel was founded in 1853, and the first Sunday School organized in it in the following spring.

By the indefatigable labors of Elder Chatterton, seconded by the enterprising and liberal citizens of the community, Oskaloosa College, an institution destined to exert a great influence upon the future history of the church, was founded; and in the autum of 1861 a school was opened in the building by G. T. <sup>v</sup>Carpenter and W. J. <sup>v</sup>Carpenter.

The ministerial labors, aside from much transient labor, have been chiefly performed, nearly in the order of numeration, by H. H. <sup>v</sup>Hendrix, A. <sup>v</sup>Chatterton, J. B. <sup>v</sup>Noe, N. E. <sup>v</sup>Corey, W. J. <sup>v</sup>Carpenter, N. A. <sup>v</sup>McConnell, G. T. <sup>v</sup>Carpenter, John <sup>v</sup>Crocker, and W. R. <sup>v</sup>Cowley.

The following named persons have, at various times occupied the position of elders: J. B. <sup>v</sup>Royal, Matthew <sup>v</sup>Edmundson, Richard <sup>v</sup>Parker, C. C. <sup>v</sup>Trim, G. W. <sup>v</sup>Hartman, O. <sup>v</sup>Hull, J. B. <sup>v</sup>Noe, J. A. <sup>v</sup>Underwood, James <sup>v</sup>Brown, P. P. <sup>v</sup>Phillips, G. T. <sup>v</sup>Carpenter, Joseph <sup>v</sup>Loughridge. And the following have occu-



pied the office of deacon: C. G. Owen, M. Edmundson, J. Adkinson, William Roberts, J. B. Noe, Thos. Hellings and Henry Mattox.

The ministerial labor is at present performed by W. R. Cowley and G. T. Carpenter. The present elders are G. T. Carpenter and J. Loughridge. The present superintendent of the Sunday School, is M. P. Givens. Present membership of the church, exclusive of those about forming other organizations, about one hundred and fifty. Present attendance at Sunday School, one hundred and sixty. Volumes in Sunday School, six hundred.

*Meetings.*—Preaching on Lord's day at 10½, and 7 o'clock P. M. Sunday School at 9 A. M. Prayer meeting Tuesday evenings.

The First United Presbyterian Church of Oskaloosa was organized June 17, 1849, with nine members, by Rev. J. C. Porter of the Second A. R. Presbytery of Ill., and was styled "The First Associate Reformed Church of Oskaloosa." This was before the union between the A. R. and the Associate Churches which resulted in the formation of the "United Presbyterian Church of North America,"—an event that took place May 26, 1858. It retained its former name until the fall of 1858 when by a unanimous vote it passed under the jurisdiction of the U. P. Church, and assumed its present name.

Poultney Loughridge and wife were the first members of the A. R. Church in Mahaska county. Jeremiah M. Dick, the eldest son of Rev. Mungo Dick, one of the primitive founders of Presbyterianism west of the mountains, was the first A. R. preacher that visited the county. He preached a number of times at the house of Mr. Loughridge. Rev. Jno. Gardner visited them afterwards, and also Rev. Lindsey of the Associate Church.

During the year 1851 Rev. R. A. Tee visited them, and after preaching a few Sabbaths, received and accepted a call, and thus became the first pastor of the congregation. Under his administration in 1853, they erected a neat and comfortable house of worship,—the second church building that was

erected in Oskaloosa,—the Cumberland Presbyterian being the first. Mr. Tee remained until 1854, when he demitted his charge, and the congregation was left vacant.

A call was subsequently made for Rev. Wm. Lorimer, but was not accepted. Rev. R. A. McArael came amongst them by appointment of General Synod, the first of June 1856. He received and accepted a call in September of that year, and thus became pastor of the congregation. During all this time members were added to the church, so that the number when he accepted the call was seventy-three. Since that time two hundred have been added. Of these something over one hundred have disappeared—some by death, and others by removal to other portions of the country; one hundred and seventy still remain. Out of these two new organizations have recently been formed in the south-east portion of the county, so that there are now three U. P. congregations in the county. Some eighteen months ago, owing to their house of worship being too small, it was sold to the Society of Friends. Since that time the congregation have been worshipping in the City Hall.

They have secured lots, laid a foundation, and propose erecting a new house of worship next summer. During the last ten years, something over ten thousand dollars have been contributed for religious and charitable purposes.

One of its former members, Miss M. McKeown, is now in the city of Alexandria, Egypt, laboring as a Missionary amongst the Jews and Copts. Another, Rev. J. M. Baugh, is now a successful pastor in the city of Bloomington, Ill. Three more are now in course of preparation for the ministry.

Twelve—all noble men—fell in the late war,—sacrifices upon their country's altar. Thirty-five in all went into the service of the country. Twenty-three returned.

One member, residing in Texas at the breaking out of the war, was forced into the rebel army. He soon after escaped into Mexico, and thence through many difficulties and privations worked his way North. His wife and children remained in

Texas until the close of the war, when they returned home to meet husband and father after a separation of four years. It is worthy of record that this congregation suffered no troubles nor distractions in consequence of the war. It had long before been purged of all political corruption, and was a unit on the side of justice and right. Under the prophetic spirit of God's everlasting truth, the divine judgments were anticipated,—and when they came, it was found on God's side and, sheltered beneath his shadow.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most high, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her right early. The heathen raged,—the kingdoms were moved; He uttered his voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.—4<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

We have made several efforts to procure a full account of the introduction of Methodism in this portion of Iowa, and more particularly into Mahaska County, but have not been very successful.

It appears that the first class was organized in the now city of Okaloosa, by Rev. A. W. Johnson, the first preacher in the county, some time in the fall of 1844—the number not remembered by our informant.

In the fall of the same year, a small log cabin, for the purposes of a parsonage, was erected on the north end of the same lot now used for the same purpose. Mr. G. T. Phillips, who was one of the first residents of the place, and whose father owned all that portion of the present city east of the Oskaloosa and Spring Creek township line, including the property of W. T. Smith, Abijah Johnson, W. H. Seevers, W. A. Hunter, M. E. Cutts, and others, informs us, that he hauled, or assisted in hauling the logs and putting up this cabin parsonage, and that the building was so far completed as to make it tenantable about the commencement of the year 1845. He says that the minister, Mr. Johnson, with such other help as was at hand, finished the house so as to make

it as comfortable as a log building could be conveniently made, and when completed, the preacher felt as thankful and comfortable as men now do in a palace. Such are primitive times. The house consisted of a single room, which served as a study, parlor, kitchen, wash-room, bed-room, pantry, dining-room, and all the other uses to which houses are generally put. Useful as this edifice was, it would not serve the purposes of a church, so that the meetings of the members for several months were held at the house of Mrs. Phillips—mother of Mr. T. G. Phillips, Mrs. Dr. Jackson, Mrs. R. V. Tomlinson and Capt. J. R. C. Hunter, all of whom are now residents of this city and county.

As we have stated during the progress of this history, a Court House was erected in what is now the city, during the year 1845, and after its completion, the Methodists and Cumberland Presbyterians, who, as we have stated, had previous to this time organized a church in the place, used this house for religious services. They continued to use this house until 1853, when, according to our informant, they erected a house of worship of their own. The membership was at that time both small and pecuniarily weak, so that they could do but little towards the erection of their house. They first undertook to build a frame, got the materials all upon the ground, but could not raise means enough to put it up and finish it. It lay in this shape for two years, when they abandoned all idea of building a frame, and concluded to put up a brick. In the year 1853, they put up a brick house forty by sixty feet, on the very spot where the present church stands. This was done during the ministry of the Rev. G. W. Teas, and was considered a great acquisition, as it truly was. After using this house until the years 1857-8, and during the pastorate of Rev. W. F. Cowles, it was found to be too small to accommodate the congregation, when by a vote of the members it was determined not to tear down and build greater, but to enlarge the old house so as to make it accommodate more people. This was done, and the house thus made more spacious and comfortable. It remained thus until during the



ministry of the Rev. Wesley Dennett, perhaps in the year 1865, when another large addition was put to the house in the shape of a T. It is now much the largest, most commodious and comfortable church building in the city—capable, as we are informed, of accommodating comfortably about seven hundred persons. This last enlargement and improvement is owing, in a very great degree, to the energy and perseverance of Rev. W. Dennett. He raised, as we are told, over six thousand dollars for the purpose, and aided by his counsel and advice in a proper distribution of it, so as to make it do the largest amount of work. Mr. Dennett as a financier and gentleman of unbounded energy and work, is, perhaps, unsurpassed by any man who ever resided in Oskaloosa. He was, to all intents and purposes, an indefatigable worker; and did as much, if not more, than any other man the Methodist Episcopal Church ever had in the city in building up and adding members to the church.

The first sermon ever preached in Mahaska County was preached on Six Mile bottom, by a Methodist minister of the name of Lewis, and he afterwards continued his labors for about six months on the Muchekinoek Mission, in connection with other ministers. Rev. A. W. Johnson, of whom mention has already been made as the person who aided in the erection of the log parsonage in the city, preached, as an itinerant, on the Mission before named, for some time during the year 1843; in 1844 he preached on the Eddyville Mission; but did not, so far as we are able to learn, ever preach in Oskaloosa as a circuit or stationed minister after the organization proper, of the church, in this place. In the year 1845 the membership of this church numbered about two hundred and sixty, at which time Revs. Kirkpatrick and Rayner were the traveling preachers. In 1846 the membership increased to about 275, and Revs. Sherin and Harrison were preachers. In 1847 the membership was about 380, Jennison and Wright preachers. In 1848 the membership was about 400, Ansen Wright, preacher.

Oskaloosa became a station in 1851, Rev. J. B. Hardy, the

first stationed preacher, with a membership of 144. The successive preachers were Revs. Harris, Stewart, Slusser, Allen-der, Cowles, Waring, Teter, Dennet and Corkhill. Dr. Corkhill is the present pastor, and has been here since the last Conference, and is very acceptable indeed, to the members of the church, as well as to many others. He is truly an able and eloquent preacher, deeply devoted to his work, and as a natural consequence much good is being done. According to our informant, the church numbered 450 members when Rev. Dennett took charge, and it numbered 550 when he left, after a three year's stay among us. There have been a number added under the care of Dr. Corkhill, but we have no means of knowing how many.

This church furnished its quota of men to the last war, the bones of a number of whom are now upon Southern soil.

That the progress of this Church may be onward and upward, is the sincere prayer of the writer.

In conversation with T. G. Phillips, of Harrison township in this county, a few days ago, we learned some very interesting facts. His father became a resident of Oskaloosa on the 22d day of April, A. D. 1844, one year after the county was organized, and purchased for farming purposes, what is now all that portion of the city east of the Oskaloosa and Spring Creek township—being the alley immediately west of the Gospel Ridge School House. There were but very few houses in the town at that time, as has been heretofore stated; and, what is the more remarkable, the town was located upon the naked prairie where not a tree grew. A person to look at the city now, would scarcely believe this; as we have what is truthfully called the "City of Trees." The first school ever held in Oskaloosa, was held in Mr. Phillips' house, which stood a little north of where the Phillips House now stands—teacher's name not remembered. Mr. T. G. Phillips' wife taught the second school in the city.

Mr. Phillips related one very amusing circumstance, and one that shows the true character of frontier life. He says his father and family arrived at what is now Oskaloosa, in

the evening, and knowing they were coming to a new country where provisions were very scarce, they brought with them a supply of flour—as much, they supposed, as would last the family a year. As would be natural under such circumstances, the news of their arrival, and especially that of the flour spread like wildfire; and the result was, they had loaned out a barrel of flour before breakfast the next morning, to entire strangers. All the formalities of fashion and diffidence were laid aside; and the people boldly and freely asked for what they wanted. This, to our mind, was nearer the manner in which one neighbor should approach and treat another, than that practiced now; yet this was a little too familiar.

He relates another incident: After getting ready to do so, his father gave out word he was going to raise a house; but asked none to come. When the time arrived, there were seventy-five persons on the ground, ready to assist. How would it be now? A man might drum for days before he could get such a company to assist him in raising a building. The people of that day, especially in this new region, were very sociable and free from all feelings of aristocracy, &c. We have had considerable experience in frontier life, and know this to be the case.

The following matter, although once printed in the *Herald*, was not read by hundreds of our new subscribers; and as it contains much of interest and instruction in regard to Iowa, of which Mahaska County forms a very conspicuous portion, we take the liberty of re-printing it. It is a truthful picture and should convince all who try to live among the stumps, rocks and gravel of the States east of us, that they are somewhat “green” in remaining there. Read and ponder over the statements made below.

We have often wondered when gazing upon fields “made in the woods,” and as thickly studded over with dead trees as they were with corn-stalks, if the owners thereof knew, that “away out West,” there was such a place as Iowa; and if, perchance, they had heard of its existence, did they be-

lieve the stories told of the countless thousands of broad acres lying here untilled, ready cleared, and waiting the "coming of man;" and if they were cognizant of the fact, how in the name of common sense they could remain among the rocks, and hills, and stumps, and delve away for a life-time for the mere privilege of having an existence, when out here in Iowa a man may own a section and be free and independent as a lord. But the truth of the matter is a majority of those who are not acquainted with prairie country, look upon the story as "fishy," "too good to be true," etc., and regard the prairie in much the same light they do the great African Sahara,—as a vast sterile desert, destitute of timber because the soil is too poor to grow it, and give it life, and many think that the only places habitable are the oasis along the streams where the overflows have deposited soil enough to grow timber. Could the inhabitants of the crowded Eastern and Middle States who to-day are slaving along as they always have been and always will be, realize that for a few hundred dollars they could secure a comfortable little home of 40, 80 or a 160 acres of the most fertile land upon God's inhabitable foot-stool, what an influx would the beautiful prairies of our thriving young State receive.

We clip the following from the *State Register*, and fully endorse the sentiments contained therein:

"*A Home in Iowa.*—Schiller, in his "Wilhelm Tell," relates that just before Tell's memorable encounter with Gesler and his cap at Altdorf, his boy Albert asks, in childish simplicity, as they journey along, "Are there no lands, father, where there are no mountains?" Tell answers, "Yes: if one goes down from our heights, and lower yet lower goes, following the streams, he comes to a great and level land where the wild waters no more rushing foam, but the rivers flow peacefully and mightily. There the corn grows in long and beautiful fields, and the whole land is like a garden, and bountiful and beautiful as heaven!" Anyone who has looked upon the magnificent prairies of the West, rejoicing in their glorious alternations of sunshine and shade, and stretching



away in unending billows of green, with nothing to break the entireness of nature's rhyming sameness but the black spots left in the trail of the settler's plow, can recognize how well the pen of Schiller described a landscape he had never seen. In the portrayal of prairie land, language is powerless and the pencil virtueless. In the grandeur of their beauty the magnificence of their flower-spangled and green-carpeted surface, and the tropical luxuriance of verdure and prolificness of crops—the prairies of Iowa—those great blank leaves in the book of nature—will remain as indescribable as their origin is mysterious. The far-famed valley of the Nile, enriched by the sediment brought down by great rivers, and those of Oregon and California derived from the washings of the hills enclosing them, have all had their merits recognized and trumpeted throughout the world. But while the fertile region of the first lies in unapproachable Africa, and those of the latter in the remote boundaries of the Occident, we simply point the home-hunter to a home more easy of procurement, in a land equally as fertile as either. No soils on the earth have been prepared on so grand a scale, so well ordered, bounteous and complete, as those of which the prairies of Iowa form a chosen portion. The soil is composed of a well proportioned mixture of clay and lime. The clay, which is in large proportion, being derived from the shales and fire-clay so abundant in its formation. Sufficient sand to make the soil warm and mellow without barrenness is derived from the sandstones underlying it, and lime enough to give it a decided calcareous character. Aside from its well proportioned mineral composition, it contains a greater portion of vegetable mould. Truly, here has nature lavished her gifts; and here, after it passes from under the patient tramp of the weary cattle, drawing the plow that breaks its virgin loam, will be the garden and the grain treasury of the world.

With this magnificent land lying here comparatively unoccupied, and thousands of acres of its most desirable portions still untouched by plow or spade—the idea energetically suggests itself, why is it that the people will dig, grub,

scrape, toil, and eke out a miserable existence among the rocky cliffs and sterile soils in the East, when they can come here and have a home of their own on a soil at once bounteous and already prepared? Rent-ridden, living at the board of the most cramped economy, and dying with scarcely enough land for generous sepulture—the tenants of New England and the peasants of Europe, alike, show an utter disregard and contempt for the liberal and abundant provisions which the Creator in His wisdom and goodness has made for them; and voluntarily entail upon themselves a life of servitude, poverty and meniality, when the doors are open and a home awaiting them in a land which knows no surfs nor superiors—but where all mankind *can*, if they wish, stand upon soil of their own, and rank with freemen before God and in right.

Thousands of acres in this State are still open to homesteads—"land for the landless;—and even in the midst of settlements, where every advantage of civilized life is enjoyed, choice locations can be had at prices within the reach of all. And no trouble will be had in procuring land, when necessary, on "long time and easy payments." With a soil the richest in the world—with a location between the two great rivers of the Union—with a surface fast becoming a network of railways—*without* the fear of the inevitable drouth which at times blights Minnesota and Kansas—with a climate as healthy as the mountain air—with a latitude which insures the fruitful vintage of the tropics and the substantial cereals of the temperate zones—with a soil of inexhaustible richness resting on vast treasure-troves of mineral wealth—with pasture-lands without boundaries, and with no obstructions but the shepherds' herds and the narrow-banked streams that meander through them—with a people as loyal as the blue on the flag—with settlements clustering around school-houses—with homes in which are found all tongues and all nationalities—and with everything to invite and nothing to repel, we throw open our gates and hold our hands to all mankind and offer them a heritage with us in the land as "bountiful as heaven!"

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